

Remarks

Claims 1-11 are now pending in this application. Applicants have amended claims 1, 5-7, 9 and 10 and cancelled claim 12 to clarify the claimed invention. Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration of this application.

The Examiner rejected claims 1-9, 11 and 12 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. patent publication 2004/0056781 to Rix et al. in view of U.S. patent 5,579,002 to Iggulden et al. The Examiner rejects claims 5, 6, and 10 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Rix et al. in view of Iggulden et al. and in view of U.S. patent 6,140,593 to Bramesfeld.

The combination of Rix et al. and Iggulden et al. does not suggest the invention recited in claims 1-9, 11 and 12 since, among other things, the combination does not suggest a modular system for control and monitoring equipment that includes a control panel, at least one movable module detachably located at the front surface of the control panel, each movable module including at least one instrument, indicator or control member, attachment elements configured to attach the at least one movable module to the control panel, and a central unit configured to transmit to and receive signals from at least one movable module, wherein the central unit is configured to influence/control units external to the system, wherein the at least one moveable module receives signals from and transmits signals to the central unit. Rather, Rix et al. suggests a plurality of input members 40 arranged on a base 42. The Examiner identifies input members 40, including dial 46, joystick 48 and key 50, as both a control member and readily removable

modules. The input members suggested by Rix et al. do not suggest a movable module that includes at least one instrument or control member. The input members 40 are the same as the dial 46, joystick 48 and key 50 and do not suggest removable modules that include an instrument, indicator and/or control member.

On the other hand, Iggulden et al. merely suggests a remote control including a plurality of keys. Iggulden et al. does not suggest a control panel or a module. Additionally, the keys do not include at least one at least one instrument, indicator or control member.

Rix et al. also does not suggest a central unit configured to transmit to and receive signals from at least one movable module, wherein the at least one moveable module receives signals from and transmits signals to the central unit. Rather, Rix et al. suggests input members that passively communicate with a communication surface that generates a carrier signal. Without the carrier signal, the input members do not function since communication between the input members and the based depends upon modulation of the carrier signal by the input members.

Additionally, Iggulden et al. merely suggests keys 110 that do not include any communication means. The keys are only meant to engage elements of a circuit board contained in a device. Therefore, Iggulden et al. also does not suggest a central unit configured to transmit to and receive signals from at least one movable module, wherein the at least one moveable module receives signals from and transmits signals to the central unit.

In view of the above, the combination of Rix et al. and Iggulden et al. does not suggest

the invention recited in claims 1-9, 11 and 12. Therefore, the invention recited in claims 1-9, 11 and 12 is not obvious in view of the combination of Rix et al. and Iggulden et al. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of this rejection.

The combination of Rix et al., Iggulden et al. and Bramesfeld does not suggest the invention recited in claims 5, 6, and 10 since, among other things, the combination does not suggest a modular system for control and monitoring equipment that includes a control panel, at least one movable module detachably located at the front surface of the control panel, each movable module including at least one instrument, indicator or control member, attachment elements configured to attach the at least one movable module to the control panel, and a central unit configured to transmit to and receive signals from at least one movable module, wherein the central unit is configured to influence/control units external to the system, wherein the at least one moveable module receives signals from and transmits signals to the central unit. Differences between the claimed invention and Rix et al. and Iggulden et al. are set forth above. Bramesfeld does not overcome the deficiencies of Rix et al. and Iggulden et al. Along these lines, Bramesfeld suggests a switch array that includes a plurality of switch caps that extend through bores. Bramesfeld does not suggest at least one module including at least one instrument, indicator or control member or a central unit configured to transmit to and receive signals from at least one movable module, wherein the central unit is configured to influence/control units external to the system, wherein the at least one moveable module receives signals from and transmits signals to the central unit.

Therefore, the combination of Rix et al., Iggulden et al. and Bramesfeld does not suggest

the invention recited in claims 5, 6, and 10. It follows that the combination of Rix et al., Iggulden et al. and Bramesfeld does not make the invention recited in claims 5, 6, and 10 obvious. Consequently, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of this rejection.

In view of the above, the references relied upon in the office action do not suggest patentable features of the claimed invention. Thus, the references relied upon in the office action do not make the claimed invention obvious. Accordingly, Applicants submit that the claimed invention is patentable over the cited references and respectfully request withdrawal of the rejections based on the cited references.

In conclusion, Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration of this application and issuance of the notice of allowance.

If an interview would advance the prosecution of this application, Applicants respectfully urge the Examiner to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The undersigned authorizes the Commissioner to charge fee insufficiency and credit overpayment associated with this communication to Deposit Account No. 22-0261.

Respectfully submitted,

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/Eric J. Franklin/
Eric J. Franklin, Reg. No. 37,134
Attorney for Applicants
Venable LLP
575 Seventh Street, NW
Washington, DC 20004
Telephone: 202-344-4936